

June 26, 2001

HONORING THE MEMORY OF MR.
KENNETH KRAKAUER

HON. KAREN MCCARTHY

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 26, 2001

Ms. MCCARTHY of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Kenneth Krakauer, whose death on June 16 is an incalculable loss to his loving family, cherished friends, and to our community. Ken touched the lives of many people through the inexhaustible energy and caring that he brought to every aspect of his life. He was a lifelong Kansas City resident and the great grandson of Bernhard Ganz, one of the first Jewish sellers in Kansas City.

Throughout his life, Ken Krakauer remained extremely dedicated to his faith, country, and community. He served in the U.S. Army Air Corps where he flew 27 missions in the European Theatre and was awarded the Air Medal with Five Oak Leaf Clusters for his bravery. He played a significant role in and was devoted to many organizations in our community, including: Director of the Menorah Medical Center for 42 years, Secretary of the Kansas City Crime Commission, Chairman and Co-founder of the Kansas City Chapter of the American Jewish Community, Co-chairman of the Kansas City Chapter of the National Conference of Christians and Jews, and a Director of the Barstow School, Visiting Nurses Association, Blue Cross and Blue Shield, UMKC University Associates, Jewish Family Services, and the Jewish Community Relations Bureau to name a few. Ken Krakauer also was an important part of the Kansas City business community. After his Presidency of the Greater Kansas City Chamber of Commerce, The Kansas City Star praised him as "an unqualified success." His grandfather, Bernhard Adler, founded Adler's in 1894, and Ken became owner and President in 1956. Adler's was the place women of all ages shopped to find the latest in fashion. It was always a special occasion for me because of the high standard of service and quality in his stores. His staff reflected his love of helping people find the uniqueness in themselves.

Ken Krakauer was instrumental in the founding of the Committee for County Progress (CCP) with community and civic leaders Bernie Hoffman, Jim Nutter, Sr., Charles Curry, Alex Petrovic, Sr., and Frank Sebree. The government reform movement in Jackson County resulted from their efforts. A charter form of government—modern, open and accessible—was created which was responsive to its citizens and inspired future generations of county leaders. I became active in the CCP, volunteering in local elections to keep the reform alive that Ken Krakauer achieved in the mid '60s as Chairman of the CCP. Through my friendship in high school with his daughter, a treasured relationship that has endured to this day, I came to revere Ken Krakauer for his sage political skills as well as his mentoring during my service in the Missouri General Assembly and my work in the United States Congress. I could always rely on his sound judgment and wisdom to assist me in sorting through the challenges I faced.

Ken Krakauer's dedication to his community was matched only by his love for golf. He was

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a talented golfer at the University of Missouri where he was a captain of the golf team before graduating in 1938 from the School of Journalism. His passion for golf remained undiminished throughout his life as he served in leadership capacities in the Kansas City Golf Foundation, the Kansas City Golf Association, the Missouri Golf Association, the Junior Golf Foundation of Greater Kansas City, and the Missouri Seniors Golf Association. Ken Krakauer also authored numerous golf articles in "Golf Digest" and "Golf Journal," as well as the book, "When Golf Came to Kansas City," the 1986 winner of the National Golf Foundation's Eckhoff Award. He was instrumental in sponsoring college scholarships for area caddies through his participation as a member of the Western Golf Association's Evans Scholars program.

Mr. Speaker, former U.S. Senator, Thomas F. Eagleton enjoyed Ken's friendship throughout his outstanding service to the people of Missouri. I wish to share his reflections with my colleagues:

Ken Krakauer was a marvelous, steadfast friend. When I was young and in my first statewide race for Attorney General of Missouri, he supported me not for what I had done, but for what he hoped I might do. Later when I was in the United States Senate, he would occasionally drop me a note saying he disagreed with a certain vote I had cast. Ken Krakauer believed that an important part of friendship was candor. I have enormous affection for Ken and his wife, Jane, and for Randee and Rex. All of us will dearly miss this wonderful, intelligent man, Ken Krakauer.

Ken Krakauer loved his family and friends with a passion even death cannot diminish. Mr. Speaker, please join me in expressing our deepest sympathy to his devoted wife of 55 years, Jane Rieger Krakauer, his son and daughter-in-law, Rex Rieger and Xiaoning Krakauer, his daughter and son-in-law, Randee Krakauer Kelley and Michael J. Kelley, and his beloved grandchildren, who loved him as KK, Tyler Randal Greif and Eli Jordan Greif. Their unqualified love of "KK" was shared with neighborhood children, untold schoolmates and friends as you will find in the remarks by Georgia Lynch which follow.

Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the attached testimonial given by Georgia Lynch at the memorial service on Tuesday, June 19th follow my statement in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD.

OUR SWEET BELOVED UNCLE KEN, JUNE 17,
2001

For those of you whom I do not know, I am Georgia Lynch. Jim and I moved next door to Ken and Jane 27 years ago. We had two little girls Megan and Kara, ages 5 and 3, and a black lab named Ned. We had no family in Kansas City. Immediately, Uncle Ken and Aunt Jane wrapped their arms around us and for the next 27 years we had family, just across the driveway. They have always been there for us, taking the place of the family we lacked.

Our little girls stopped at their back door to ask for cookies, to show off their Halloween costumes, their Easter dresses, their prom dresses, their wedding dresses. Uncle Ken was there to talk about the problems of the day, to give advice and direction, or just to give a hug and a kiss. He was always there willing to be interviewed for school projects

and essays, a wealth of knowledge on the most interesting subjects. He asked about their day, their friends, their sports, their boyfriends and was important in their lives. Dogs Megan and Charlie and then Jocko lived there too and were the girls' playmates. Our dog Ned was a problem when we first moved into our house. Our yard was not fenced and he was running the neighborhood. Uncle Ken to the rescue. He arranged for a man who lived in the country to take Ned and care for him. Uncle Ken was forever retrieving balls from his back yard that wandered over the fence, moving bicycles from his driveway, buying cups of lemonade from the girls' lemonade stands. Uncle Ken could always be counted on to buy school trash bags, flowers, candy, help with Brownie and Girl Scout projects, put a Band-Aid on a scratched knee. How wonderful to have Uncle Ken across the driveway. The girls knew he could look in our kitchen window and that he knew everything that went on in the house next door.

Ken loved the Kansas City Chiefs, and always listened with great interest and concern to Jim's tales of adventure on the gridiron. He seldom missed a game and was always there to boost our spirits when we lost or give a strong pat on the back when we won. He followed the children's little sports too, gave directions on the art of roller skating and mastering a bicycle. He could always be counted on to help perfect a golf swing. His stories on Kansas City golf history were amazing. His stories on Kansas City in general were amazing. We listened and we learned.

Our son Jake was born 19 years ago; Ken and Jane were at the door when we brought him home from the hospital. Ken asked us to reconsider calling the baby Jake, "Sounds too much like an old Jewish man rather than an Irish Catholic baby boy." Ken said, "Call him Michael or Patrick." But no, it would stay Jake.

Jake loved his Uncle Ken, as did Megan and Kara. He too would knock on the back door asking for cookies and a chat. Uncle Ken was so sweet with Jake, such a wonderful role model for our young boy. A pat on the back, a bear hug, always a "How's it going Jake?" And then, he would listen.

Most days, when Jim was out of town, my newspapers would be at my back door when I came down to the kitchen. How many many mornings did I see the top of his head walk past my kitchen window and hear the slight thump of Uncle Ken in his bathrobe, delivering the news to the kitchen door? How many times did I call him when the power went out, the alarms went off, a strange sound was heard? He would show up at my back door to see if we were OK, one time at 1:00 in the morning dressed in his trench coat over his pajamas with a butcher knife up his sleeve, ready to protect the children and me from an intruder.

Two weeks ago, Jim was babysitting our two-year-old granddaughter Morgan Grace, on a Saturday afternoon. They too, knocked on the Krakauers' back door. Aunt Jane was not home but Uncle Ken was, and of course he brought them to the kitchen table for a big chocolate brownie and milk. Papa Lynch, Uncle Ken and now our grandbaby Morgan, continuing the tradition of so many years with our next generation. Jim said, as always, Uncle Ken talked with little Morgan one on one, giving her his full and loving attention, and a great time was had by all.

What an anchor in our lives our Uncle Ken has been. He is more than a neighbor, more than a friend, he is our Uncle Ken, and we

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love him deeply and completely. He will always be a part of our lives. How we will miss his wave across the driveway. The last thing he ever did when entering his house was al-	ways to glance at our kitchen window before the garage door would come down. Always checking on us in his loving way. How I will miss those taillights pulling into the garage,	the sound of the car door slamming, and that sweet smile and wave across the drive.
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